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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/FO - ELISA CATALANO, ISN/RA - RICHARD NEPHEW  
AND EAP/J

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/02/2020  
TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [IR](#) [JA](#)  
SUBJECT: MOBILIZING PRESSURE TO PERSUADE IRAN'S ENGAGEMENT  
ON ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM

REF: STATE 9124

Classified By: Ambassador John V. Roos per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Drawing on reftel background and talking points, the Ambassador, joined by visiting EAP Assistant Secretary Kurt Campbell, met February 2 with Vice Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka to outline next steps in dealing with Iran and to seek GOJ support for increasing international pressure on Iran to address concerns regarding its nuclear program. Both the Ambassador and A/S Campbell stressed that Iran is the most important issue on the President's foreign policy agenda and that Japan's support is essential.

¶2. (C) VFM Yabunaka said that Japan continues to consult closely with the U.S. on Iran and has diligently implemented all UN Security Council resolutions dealing with Iran. Japan indicated its support for additional sanctions on Iran within the context of a new UNSC resolution. Yabunaka stressed the importance of broad-based action against Iran, saying that all countries must participate in order for new measures to be effective. He added that if Japan were to impose national-level measures while other countries did not, that would "not make sense." Yabunaka noted that Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani would visit February 23-27 and that the GOJ would also deliver the "clear message" during his visit that Iran must address concerns about its nuclear program. MOFA Second Middle East Division told Embassy Poloff separately that the Larijani visit was at the invitation of the Diet. As such, MOFA was not involved in any arrangements. Yabunaka pledged to continue to consult closely with the U.S. on Iran.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: Yabunaka's comment that new measures must have broad support reflects some skepticism toward possible Japanese national-level measures against Iran. The GOJ is clearly more comfortable with new sanctions in the context of a UNSC resolution and may be reluctant to impose new sanctions without the imprimatur of the Security Council.  
ROOS